

in flank, whilst he, M. de Lignery, and the other officers who led the French, were attacking them in front. This order was executed so promptly that the enemy, who were already shouting their "Long live the King," thought now only of defending themselves.

The fight was obstinate on both sides and success long doubtful; but the enemy at last gave way. Efforts were made, in vain, to introduce some sort of order in their retreat. The whoop of the Indians, which echoed through the forest, struck terror into the hearts of the entire enemy. The rout was complete. We remained in possession of the field with six brass twelves and sixes [cannon], four howitz-carriages of fifty, eleven small royal grenade mortars, all their ammunition, and, generally, their entire baggage.

Some deserters, who have come in since, have told us that we had been engaged with only 2000 men, the remainder of the army being four leagues further off. These same deserters have informed us that the enemy were retreating to Virginia, and some scouts, sent as far as the height of land, have confirmed this by reporting that the thousand men who were not engaged had been equally panic-stricken, and abandoned both provisions and ammunition on the way. On this intelligence, a detachment was dispatched after them, which destroyed and burnt everything that could be found.

The enemy have left more than 1000 men on the field of battle. They have lost a great portion of the artillery and ammunition, provisions, as also their general, whose name was Mr. Braddock, and almost all their officers. We have had 3 officers killed; 2 officers and 2 cadets wounded. Such a victory, so entirely unexpected, seeing the inequality of the forces, is the fruit of M. Dumas' experience, and of the activity and valor of the officers under his command.

3. Francis Parkman Analyzes the Conflict (1884)

Francis Parkman (1823–1893), the partially blind and nervously afflicted Boston historian, produced the classic multivolume epic of the struggle between Britain and France for supremacy in North America. Determined to absorb local color, he ranged widely by canoe and on foot over the region about which he wrote. Although he is best known for his descriptive powers, his analytical talents are brilliantly revealed in these observations following his account of the surrender of Montreal, the last French stronghold, in 1760. Why did the French hold out as long as they did? Why did the English seem inept?

Half the continent had changed hands at the scratch of a pen. Governor Bernard, of Massachusetts, proclaimed a day of thanksgiving for the great event, and the Boston newspapers recount how the occasion was celebrated with a parade of the cadets and other volunteer corps, a grand dinner in Faneuil Hall, music, bonfires, illuminations, firing of cannon, and, above all, by sermons in every church of the province; for the heart of early New England always found voice through her pulpits. . . .

³Francis Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1884; 1899 reprint), vol. 2, pp. 391–396, *passim*.

On the American continent the war was ended, and the British colonists breathed for a space, as they drifted unwittingly towards a deadlier strife. They had learned hard and useful lessons. Their mutual jealousies and disputes, the quarrels of their governors and assemblies, the want of any general military organization, and the absence, in most of them, of military habits, joined to narrow views of their own interest, had unfitted them to the last degree for carrying on offensive war. Nor were the British troops sent for their support remarkable in the beginning for good discipline or efficient command.

When hostilities broke out, the army of Great Britain was so small as to be hardly worth the name. A new one had to be created; and thus the inexperienced [Governor] Shirley [of Massachusetts] and the incompetent [Earl of] Loudon, with the futile [Prime Minister] Newcastle behind them; had, besides their own incapacity, the disadvantage of raw troops and half-formed officers; while against them stood an enemy who, though weak in numbers, was strong in a centralized military organization, skillful leaders armed with untrammelled and absolute authority, practiced soldiers, and a population not only brave, but in good part inured to war.

The nature of the country was another cause that helped to protract the contest. "Geography," says Von Moltke, "is three-fourths of military science"; and never was the truth of his words more fully exemplified. Canada was fortified with vast outworks of defense in the savage forests, marshes, and mountains that encompassed her, where the thoroughfares were streams choked with fallen trees and obstructed by cataracts. Never was the problem of moving troops, encumbered with baggage and artillery, a more difficult one. The question was less how to fight the enemy than how to get at him. If a few practicable roads had crossed this broad tract of wilderness, the war would have been shortened and its character changed.

From these and other reasons, the numerical superiority of the English was to some extent made unavailing. This superiority, though exaggerated by French writers, was nevertheless immense, if estimated by the number of men called to arms. But only a part of these could be employed in offensive operations. The rest garrisoned forts and blockhouses and guarded the far reach of frontier from Nova Scotia to South Carolina, where a wily enemy, silent and secret as fate, choosing their own time and place of attack, and striking unawares at every unguarded spot, compelled thousands of men, scattered at countless points of defense, to keep unceasing watch against a few hundred savage marauders. Full half the levies of the colonies, and many of the regulars, were used in service of this kind.

In actual encounters the advantage of numbers was often with the French, through the comparative ease with which they could concentrate their forces at a given point. Of the ten considerable sieges or battles of the war, five, besides the great bush-fight in which the Indians defeated Braddock, were victories for France; and in four of these—Oswego, Fort William Henry, Montmorenci, and Ste.-Foy—the odds were greatly on her side.

Yet in this most picturesque and dramatic of American wars, there is nothing more noteworthy than the skill with which the French and Canadian leaders used their advantages; the indomitable spirit with which, slighted and abandoned as they were, they grappled with prodigious difficulties; and the courage with which they were seconded by regulars and militia alike. In spite of occasional lapses, the defense of Canada deserves a tribute of admiration.

vere at-
y, who
ending

enemy
in their
& terror
posses-
ages of
ly, their

een en-
her off.
Virginia,
porting
en, and
e, a de-
ing that

ave lost
general,
officers
ed, see-
the ac-

' Boston
in and
olor, he
lthough
ntly re-
real, the
ey did?

overnor
ent, and
arade of
sic, bon-
nurch of
ugh her

nt), vol. 2,